

## PENDING CLAIMS

1. (Twice Amended) An isolated mutant non-structural ("NS") HCV polypeptide comprising a polypeptide having a deletion of at least 200 amino acids from the N-terminal portion of NS3, wherein said deletion functionally disrupts the catalytic domain of NS3 and further wherein said polypeptide comprises the C-terminal portion of NS3.

2-3. Canceled.

4. The polypeptide of claim 1, wherein said NS polypeptide comprises NS3, NS4 and NS5.

5. The polypeptide of claim 1, wherein said NS polypeptide consists of NS3, NS4 and NS5.

6. The polypeptide of claim 1, wherein said NS polypeptide consists of NS3 and NS5.

7. The polypeptide of claim 6, wherein said NS5 polypeptide consists of NS5a.

8. The polypeptide of claim 6, wherein said NS5 polypeptide consists of NS5b.

9. The polypeptide of claim 1, wherein said NS polypeptide consists of NS3 and NS4.

10. The polypeptide of claim 9, wherein said NS5 polypeptide consists of NS4a.

11. The polypeptide of claim 9, wherein said NS5 polypeptide consists of NS4b.

12. The polypeptide of claim 4, further comprising a second viral polypeptide that is not NS3, NS4 or NS5 of HCV.

13. (Amended) The polypeptide of claim 12, wherein the second viral polypeptide comprises an HCV Core polypeptide ("C") or immunogenic fragment thereof.

14. The polypeptide of claim 13, wherein the C polypeptide is truncated.

15. The polypeptide of claim 14, wherein the truncation is at amino acid 121.

16. The polypeptide of claim 12, wherein the polypeptide further comprises an HCV envelope protein ("E").

17. The polypeptide of claim 16, wherein the E is E1.
18. The polypeptide of claim 16, wherein the E is E2.
19. A composition comprising
  - (a) the polypeptide of claim 1; and
  - (b) a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

20-31. Canceled.

32. The polypeptide of claim 1, wherein the polypeptide further comprises SEQ ID NO:9.

33-42. Canceled.